



Office of the Coroner Mission Statement



LARAMIE COUNTY OFFICE OF THE CORONER

310 West 19th Street, Suite 410
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001-4449
(307) 637-8000

Please accept our heartfelt condolences for your loss...

The death of a loved one is often a difficult and confusing time. You may have to speak with doctors, nurses, fire personnel, EMS providers, police officers, funeral directors, in addition to notifying family and friends. In some cases, you may also have to speak with a representative of the Coroner's Office.

The Coroner is the official responsible for determining the cause, circumstances and manner of a person's death as a result of accidents, injuries, or those who die suddenly, unexpected, or under questionable circumstances. The Coroner is an independent investigator, although they may work with law enforcement agencies, the hospital and other providers.

You may speak with a representative from the Coroner's Office who will gather information about the deceased that may be useful in determining the cause and manner of death. Depending on the circumstances surrounding the death, the decedent may be released directly to a funeral home or taken to a facility for further investigation.

The Office of the Coroner for Laramie County, Wyoming has the duty to conduct complete and objective medicolegal investigations of death in order to determine the cause, manner and circumstances of death. ***This entrusted duty is performed:***

Through our actions: representing those who can no longer represent themselves;

Providing quality services as required by law or mandated by public expectation in order to enhance the health, safety and general well being of the citizens and guests of Laramie County;

Assuming jurisdiction over persons who come to their death suddenly, or where the death is caused by unnatural or unlawful means, ensuring the decedent and their survivors are treated with the highest dignity and respect;

Ensuring that investigations are carried out in an expeditious and professional manner while maintaining the highest level of sensitivity and compassion for the deceased and their surviving loved ones in their time of grief;

Working in partnership with other organizations toward reduction of preventable deaths and;

Providing educational opportunities and continuing to serve as a resource for the public in the field of medicolegal death investigation.

The Office of the Coroner and Medicolegal Death Investigation

*Answers for Family and Friends
For you, we serve this mission*



***Prepared by the Office of the Coroner,
Laramie County, Wyoming
2007***

A Message from the Coroner

This brochure is provided to answer just a few of the questions you may have concerning the death of your loved one. I and my Deputies will avail ourselves to you as we work through this investigative process. **Know that we are here to protect the rights and serve the interests of the deceased during this time.** This is our only duty and mission. Please use us as a resource for your questions and concerns.

Martin A. Luna
Laramie County Coroner

The Medicolegal Death Investigation

Every state has a medicolegal death investigation system in place. Wyoming utilizes the elected Coroner system.

The Coroner and his Deputies are specially trained in the process of the medicolegal investigation of death.

The medicolegal death investigation is a specialized examination integrating personal, social and medical history, scene investigation, external examination of the deceased and may include an internal examination by autopsy which includes tissue, toxicology, laboratory and microscopic evaluations and evidentiary data. Such an evaluation may take several days or weeks to complete, but are all elements of a proper investigation into the cause and manner of death.

The obligation for proper death investigation is mandatory for legal, religious and humanitarian satisfactions in society.

Reportable Deaths

The Coroner has a legal obligation to investigate deaths within his jurisdiction. In most cases, this is done in conjunction with a law enforcement agency. In general, these are the types of cases a Coroner will investigate:

- * Homicides and Suicides
- * Accidents resulting in death
- * Deaths with unusual, unexplained or suspicious circumstances
- * Deaths of children
- * Deaths not attended by a physician

For more information...

Do you have questions? Please feel free to contact the Office of the Coroner:

In an emergency:

911

Information:

307.633.4513

Duty:

307.637.8000

Office:

310 West 19th Street, Suite 410
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001-4449

Autopsy

In certain situations, the circumstances surrounding a persons death may require further examination. An autopsy may be performed to better understand these circumstances and to establish the cause and manner of an individuals death. **Not every death investigated by the Coroner requires autopsy.**

Funeral arrangements do not have to be postponed or changed because an autopsy must be performed. Family members may still view their loved one during funeral services.

During an autopsy, a Pathologist, consulted by the Coroner, examines and documents any evidence of the person's medical conditions. Many times, diseases or conditions unknown to the deceased or the family are uncovered. The Coroner assists in the autopsy process. Samples of blood, urine and other fluids are collected for toxicology screening. Also, the Pathologist may undertake histology examination of pieces of tissue.

From the evidence uncovered at autopsy and the other circumstances uncovered in the Coroner's investigation, the Coroner can determine the cause and manner of death for the person and assist the family in their recovery efforts.